MINUTES

OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

NORTH RIVER UNITED BAPTIST

ASSOCIATION,

CONVENED AT NEW-HOPE CHURCH,

WALKER COUNTY,

Commencing on Saturday, September 15th,

1844.

TUSKALOOSA:

PRINTED BY M. D. J. SLADE.

1844.

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1844.

1. Elder DAVID W. ANDREWS, who was appointed by the last Association to preach the Introductory Sermon. failing to attend, elder JAMES A. JONES, his alternate, delivered an appropriate discourse from Matthew, 28th chapter, 19th and 20th verses.

2. After which, the Delegates assembled in the Meeting-House. Singing, and prayer by elder Tilmon Howel. The Association then elected elder TILMON HOWEL Moderator, and brother JOHN YERBY, Clerk pro tem. The Letters from the several Churches were then read, and the delegates names enrolled.

3. Opened a door for the reception of Churches. When, came forward and were received, by letter and delegates, the following Churches, viz.— Mount Ivy, Fayette county; Columbia, Enon, and Macedonia, of Tuskaloosa county; in token of which, the Moderator gave the right hand of fellowship.

4. Elder TILMON HOWEL was elected Moderator, and brother THOMAS M. GABBERT, Clerk.

5. Appointed the following committees: 1st. On Arrangement—B. B. Smith, J. Yerby, J. A. Jones, W. Richards, and G. Lampkin, with the Moderator and Clerk. 2d. To arrange preaching—A Catledge, G. Lampkin, S. Lowrimore, A. Lawrence, and J. Yerby. 3d. On Finance—J. Savage and J. Ray.

6. On motion, adjourned until 3 o'clock, this evening. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

7. Met according to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by elder B. B. Smith.

8. Read the Rules of Decorum.

9. Brethren J. Yerby, H. Yerby, A. Catledge, R. Files, and W. Richards were appointed a committee to examine into the expediency of omitting the printing of the Circular at this time.

10 The committee to arrange the preaching, reported, elders R. Walden and B. B. Smith to preach first; after a short intermission, W. Cole and T. Howel; at candle light, T. M. Gabbert and J. A. Jones to occupy the stand, on the Sabbath, in the order of their names.

11. On motion, adjourned until Monday morning, 8 o'clock. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

SABBATH, 15th SEPT. 1844.

The Ministers preached in the order of their names, to a large congregation. An invitation was given to mourners, and a goodly number presented themselves as such. Christians were rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord, and several of the mourners found the Lord precious to their immortal souls.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1844.

12. The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

13. The committee of arrangement made their report, which was received, and the committee discharged.

14. *Resolved*, That this Association be laid off into Districts: and that brethren B. B. Smith, J. Yerby, and W. Richards, with the Moderator, be appointed a committee to act on this resolution.

15. Called for the Circular Letter, which was read, received and approved.

16. Called for the report of the committee appointed to examine into the expediency of omitting the printing of the Circular Letter. The committee reported it inexpedient to print, for the want of funds.

17. Elder B. B. Smith was appointed to write the next Circular Letter, and to choose his own subject.

18. Took up the case of Home Missions, and proceeded to appoint an executive committee, which was composed of brethren Willis Richards, John Savage, John Long, Thomas W. McGowin, James A. Jones, Alson Catledge, Thomas M. Gabbert, Absalom Deason, Alexander Lawrence, Jacob Lindley, Abner Files, Alexander Ramsey, Lewis Sherley, and James Sudduth, for the purpose of putting the above into operation.

19. Took up the query from New Hope Church, which is as follows: Where a member transgresses, shall the evidence for or against the accused be confined to the Church exclusively, or not? We advise that the evidence be confined to members of the Church exclusively.

20. On motion, adjourned until 3 o'clock this evening. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

21. The Association met according to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

22. The committee on finance report $29 41; which report was received, and the committee discharged.

23. Resolved, That the first Rule of our Decorum read thus: "The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer."

24. The committee on Districting the Association, made their report, which was received, and the committee discharged.

25. First District—to be composed of churches Enon, Macedonia, Columbia, Salem, and Liberty. The meeting to be held with Columbia church, to commence Friday before the first Sabbath in September, 1845. Elder B. B. Smith to preach the Introductory Sermon, and elder Jesse Walden his alternate.

26. Second District—to be composed of churches Shepherd, Pilgrim's Rest, Union, and Mount Pleasant. The Association to be held with Union church, to commence Fridey before the second Sabbath in September, 1845, and that elder David W. Andrews be appointed to preach the Anniversary Sermon, and elder Tilmon Howel his alternate.

27. Third District—to be composed of churches Zion, Bethlehem, Mount Joy, New Hope, and Ebenezer. The meeting to be held with Ebenezer church, to commence Friday before the second Sabbath in October, 1845. Elder Tilmon Howel to preach the Introductory Sermon, and elder James Ray his alternate.

28. On motion, adjourned until Friday before the second Sabbath in November next. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

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29. Met at Shepherd church, according to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

30. Elders B. B. Smith, J. Walden, A. Files, and James A. Jones, with brethren J. Shepherd, T. W. McGowin, J. Yerby, S. Lowrimore, J. Winter, J. Fears, E. Hardy, A. Ramsey, W. Richards, and R. Files, with the Moderator and Clerk, were appointed a committee to revise, alter, or amend our Constitution and Confession of Faith.

31. On motion, adjourned until to-morrow morning, 10 o'clock. Singing, and prayer by elder B. B. Smith.

32. Met according to adjournment. Singing, and prayer by the Moderator.

33. The committee on revising the Constitution and Confession of Faith, made their report, which was received, and the committee discharged.

34. *Resolved*, That an Abstract of Principles, as published in the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, be published in our present Minutes, and recommended to the Churches as a substitute for the one now in use, provided the Abstract proposed shall not be considered binding on any of our Churches, unless adopted by them in their Church capacity.

35. *Resolved*, That we insert the acknowledgment made by Salem Church of this Association, last December the 9th, to the minority of that Church, in our present minutes; likewise the following article, viz: of our opening a door for free communion; which error we have long since retraced from.

36. Appointed elder B. B. Smith to preach a Missionary Sermon on Sabbath of our next Association, and elder Tilmon Howel his alternate.

37. *Resolved*, That this Association have 700 copies of these minutes printed, and that brethren John Yerby and Absalom Deason be appointed to superintend the printing of the same.

38. *Resolved*, That James Fears be appointed Distributing Agent of the First District; Isaac Shepherd Distributing Agent of the Second District, and elder James A. Jones Distributing Agent of the Third District.

39. *Resolved*, That this Association give the brother Clerk Ten Dollars for his services.

40. *Resolved*, That the grateful feelings of this body be expressed toward the brethren and friends of New Hope and Shepherd churches, and their vicinities, for their kindness and hospitality to the delegates and visiters.

Closed with singing, prayer and benediction by the Moderator.

THOMAS M. GABBERT, *Clerk*. TILMON HOWEL, *Moderator*.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

	CHURCHES. COUNTIES.	C. M.	MINISTERS & DELEGATES. Ministers names in SMALL CAPITALS.	Baptised	Rec. by Let.	Secession	Dismissed	Excluded	Restored	Dead	Total in Felip.	Contribution for Minutes	Contribution for Ass'nal purp.
1st District, 2d Dis. 3d District.	Enon, Tuskaloosa	3	J. D. Marcus, J. Sudduth, J. Fears,	...	...	..	..	...	...	...	17	1 00	50
	Macedonia, do	4	L. Cherley, E. Hardy, A. Hardy,	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	27	1 00	1 00
	Columbia, do	1	A. Ramsey, J. Howel, J. D. Colbert	..	...	..	...	...	...	..	13	1 00	50
	Salem, do	3	T. HOWEL, W. Richards, D. Collins	7	4	13	13	...	2	...	129	2 00	2 00
	Liberty, do	4	J. Yerby, J. Garner. A. Deason,	8	2	..	1	...	...	...	24	1 00	2 00
	Shepherd, Fay'te	2	J. RAY, John Savage, I. Shepherd,	10	...	1	5	6	...	...	93	2 00	2 00
	Pilgrim's Rest, do	4	J. WALDEN, A. Catledge, H. Yerby	3	8	..	2	...	...	...	44	1 00	99
	Union, do	1	B. B. SMITH, E. S. Marcus, J. Long,	18	9	3	4	2	...	...	95	2 00	2 00
	Mt. Pleasant, do	3	J. T. Collins, J. Lindley, J. Winter,	3	...	2	..	1	...	...	35	50	50
	Zion, Marion,	4	T. W. McGowin, H Bollin, J Webb	8	3	1	2	1	...	...	49	1 50	44
	Bethlehem, Tusk.	1	T. M. GABBERT, R. Files, C. Ward,	8	9	1	15	...	...	..	22	1 12	.....
	Mt. Joy, Fayette	4	A. FILES, Lewis Harlin, A Chesteen	..	...	..	..	1	...	...	25	1 00	60
	N. Hope, Walker	3	S Lowrimore, A LAWRENCE, G LAMKIN	2	1	4	2	1	...	...	34	25	.....
	Ebenezer, do	4	J. Stags, W Rutledge, J. A. JONES,	10	...	..	..	...	...	..	35	1 00	50
				77	36	25	44	12	2	...	642	16:37	13:03

Acknowledgment made by Salem Church, Dec. 9th, 1843.

DEAR BRETHREN—We have met with you at this your Conference meeting, for the purpose of acknowledging, as far as we think and feel, that we did wrong.

Dear Brethren, we see and know we did wrong in voting away that Abstract of Faith, when we believed every article except two, and we were willing to admit them, provided we could have our own constructions on them; but at that time, the way some of the ministers preached and contended, we could not agree with them; neither can we yet agree with that kind of doctrine. Brethren, we are very anxious to have a union, and to have a correspondence with your Association. We intend to remain as we are, as a body that is organized and known by the name of the North River Association. So we conclude our remarks by humbly soliciting an interest in your prayers. Farewell.

BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH.

1st. *Of the Scriptures.*—We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, Salvation for its end, and Truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

2d. *Of the true God.*—That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness; worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinction of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3d. *Of the Fall of Man.*—That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

4th. *Of the Way of Salvation.*—That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in Heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour.

5th. *Of Justification.*—That the great Gospel blessings, which Christ of his fulness bestows on such as believe in Him, is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

6th. *Of the Freeness of Salvation.*—That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith: and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

7th. *Of Grace in Regeneration.*—That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit; so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel, and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

8th. *Of God's Purpose of Grace.*—That Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;

that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end: that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the Gospel; it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

9th. *Of the Perseverance of Saints.*—That such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

10th. *Harmony of the Law and Gospel.*—That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.

11th. *Of a Gospel Church.*—That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of bastized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

12th. *Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*—That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Fateer, Son, and Spirit; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour; with its purifying power; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a Church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the Church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ: preceded always by solemn self-examination.

13th. *Of the Christian Sabbath.*—That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

14th. *Of Civil Government.*—That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

15th, *Of the Righteous and the Wicked.*—That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous Hin is esteem; while all such

as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

15th. *Of the World to come.*—That the end of this world is approaching, and that at the last day, Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

CONSTITUTION.

We, the United Baptist Churches of Jesus Christ, in Alabama, that believe the doctrine of a free salvation, and a general atonement. We all have been baptised upon a profession of our faith in Christ. We are desirous of a reciprocal union. We therefore purpose to maintain the order and rules of an Association, according to the following plan:

We believe that the Churches of Christ are mutually independent of each other; and that the congressional form of church government should be inviolably preserved; yet being convinced of the utility of friendly intercourse and pious counsels, on the principle of reciprocal advantage and Christian love, we hold it to be a duty of the Churches to pay respect on these principles, to the advice of the Association.

Article 1. This Association shall be composed of members chosen by the different Churches in our Union; who, on producing letters from their respective Churches, certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats. The letters so produced shall express the condition of their churches respectively, viz: the number in fellowship, the number received by baptism, by letters, by secession, dismissed, excommunicated, restored, and dead, since the last Association; which letters shall be read, and the Delegates names enrolled.

Art. 2. The members thus chosen and convened, shall be known by the name of the North River United Baptist Association.

Art. 3. The Association thus formed, shall choose, by the suffrages of the members present, a Clerk and Moderator, who shall serve one year.

Art. 4. This body shall have no coercive power to lord it over God's heritage, or to infringe on any of the internal privileges or rights of the Churches in our Union, but shall only be considered an advisory council in all matters respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 5. To give Churches the best advice she can in all matters of difficulty; and if the Union should be broken between any of the sister Churches, to inquire into the cause of the breach, and use her best endeavors to remove the difficulty; but if the breach cannot be repaired, to withdraw from any Church or Churches, which they may look upon to be unsound in principle, or immoral in practice, until they be reclaimed.

Art. 6. To take up no case of any Church in the Union, without the consent of a majority of the Church.

Art. 7. Newly constituted or dismissed Churches, may be received into our Union, by their representatives, chosen as before stated; and the Moderator shall signify the same by giving them the right hand of fellowship.

Art. 8. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by such rules as she may adopt. She may adjourn from day to day, until she shall have finished all the business that may be brought before her.

Art. 9. Every Church shall be entitled to a representation of three members.

Art. 10. To have the Minutes of the Association read, and altered, if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the Association rises; and have them printed if she thinks proper.

Art. 11. The Association shall, in all cases, be governed by a majority of the members present.

Art. 12. Voting shall be confined exclusively to the body, in all acts respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 13. To amend the plan or form of government at any time, when a majority of the union shall deem it necessary.

RULES OF DECORUM.

Rule 1. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.

Rule 2. But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall rise and address the Moderator.

Rule 3. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he departs from the subject in question, or use words of a personal reflection.

Rule 4. Every motion made and seconded, shall come under the consideration of the Association, except withdrawn by him who made it.

Rule 5. Every case taken up by the Association shall first be decided or withdrawn before another is offered.

Rule 6. When any question is taken up by the Association, after allowing time for debate, the Moderator shall take the question, by yeas and nays, or otherwise. The decision thus made shall be announced by the Moderator immediately.

Rule 7. No person shall depart from the service of the Association, without leave of the Moderator.

Rule 8. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject, without leave obtained.

Rule 9. The appellation of brother shall be used in our addresses one to another.

Rule 10. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privileges as any other member, provided he appoints some other member to fill his seat, while speaking or otherwise, but shall not vote unless the Association be equally divided.

Rule 11. Any member violating the above rules, may be reproved, as the Association may think proper, only on the same day the offence shall have occurred.